



Introduced Version

HOUSE RESOLUTION No. 119

Introduced by: **Kruse**

A HOUSE RESOLUTION opposing the designation of rivers in Indiana as American Heritage Rivers under the American Heritage Rivers Initiative.

Whereas, The federal government announced its intention to initiate the American Heritage Rivers Initiative by Executive Order 13061 in the Federal Register on May 19, 1997, and reissued the order on June 20, 1997, without Congressional approval;

Whereas, The American Heritage Rivers Initiative (AHRI) would designate ten American waterways as Heritage Rivers, each to be overseen by a River Navigator appointed by the executive branch of the federal government at a salary of \$100,000 per year, who would coordinate the efforts of 13 federal agencies that would advise local communities on river restoration projects;



Whereas, Although the AHRI has been promoted by the administration as a "grassroots, bottom-up" initiative, the designation of rivers and river segments for the program and the selection of the River Navigator exclude any local input;

Whereas, The authority asserted by the executive branch to initiate the AHRI through executive order is without constitutional basis and circumvents the legislative process;

Whereas, The AHRI is not needed because communities across America are working to revitalize their waterfronts and to enhance the historic, cultural, recreational, economic, public health, and environmental values of their rivers;

Whereas, The intrusion of a River Navigator, who is envisioned under the AHRI to be the final arbiter over decisions related to Heritage Rivers, into local land use and water resource decision making effectively usurps local control and stifles local decision making and may lead to de facto federal land use and water allocation regulations without statutory authority;

Whereas, Such intrusion by the River Navigator could well lead to inappropriate influence on decision making regarding the distribution of federal funds;

Whereas, Although the AHRI program is purported to be voluntary, no provision in the AHRI prevents a selection council from nominating a river over the objections of private landowners based on the support of entities in the area that have no property or economic interests in the river basin; and

Whereas, The AHRI is contrary to the current administration's reinventing government program, which includes the principles of less government and less cost to the taxpayer: Therefore,



*Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the
General Assembly of the State of Indiana:*

SECTION 1. That we, the members of the Indiana House of Representatives, hereby request that no rivers in Indiana be designated as Heritage Rivers under the American Heritage Rivers Initiative.

SECTION 2. That we, the members of the Indiana House of Representatives, hereby request the withdrawal of the American Heritage Rivers Initiative.

SECTION 3. That we, the members of the Indiana House of Representatives, hereby request the Congress of the United States to withhold funding for the implementation of the American Heritage Rivers Initiative.

SECTION 4. That the principal clerk of the House of Representatives shall transmit copies of this resolution to each member of Indiana's Congressional delegation and the President of the United States.

